TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

In compliance with the wishes of very many of our Subscribers, we have had prepared a cover for binding the copies of THE BUILDER *for those who may be desirous of preserving them in uniform Volumes. These may be had on application at the office, at the price of Two Shillings; or our Publisher will undertake to get sets bound at a charge of Three Shillings per Volume.*

THE BUILDER,

NO. XLVII.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1843.

ADDRESS.

In drawing to the close of our first year's task, we are naturally impelled to review our labours, and to offer thanks to the professional and operative members of the public upon whom we have leaned for support, with the wish of returning to the best of our ability the kindness bestowed upon us. The attempt to raise out of nothing, a leading magazine devoted to practical building, was, no doubt, a bold one, but, like most bold emprises, has been crowned with success; and at the end of a chequered year, we have the gratification of feeling that a publication which we can hardly expect to arrive at the extensive circulation of an ordinary journal of news and politics, has during so short a period, reached beyond the average circulation of the most favoured of periodicals devoted to art, science, or class-literature. Where we have failed, our lacbes have not been caused through *wilful* misconduct on our part. Our purpose, we may truly say, has been constant and unrelaxed, to benefit all the branches of society practically employed in building. Our correspondents daily increase; and we have reason to hope that with accession of numbers, will come also the augmentation of intrinsic value.

We have, however, to regret the loss of the services of our original editor, and indeed founder; we should have been the more grieved by this occurrence, had we not been able to procure the talents and energy of an architectural author, whose whole life has been devoted to the study and improvement of practical architecture in its most minute technicalities; under his management we hope to see brought to light, fostered, and nurtured into fruitage, a school of orthodox practice in every branch of the operative literature and the graphic development of architecture. We know that he is fearless in asserting the truth, yet tender of wounding by unjust criticism even the most unworthy.

We hereby express our determination in our future career, that in order to merit the highest patronage given to architectural literature, all coarseness, personal vituperation, or unhandsome remarks will be studiously avoided; and if any approach or even fancied approach to these offences, from which we would remain uncontaminated, has at any time appeared in our pages during the past year, we most humbly crave absolution, and at the same time wish to assert the truth, viz. that such was contrary to our intention. Under the able hands to which our periodical will in future be committed, we trust the operative builder and the polished gentleman will alike receive improvement, knowledge, and pleasure from the perusal of our columns. Our subscribers will find early in the coming year the result of the powerful arrangements which we have made for the furtherance of architectural science, and we trust that good taste and soundness of principle, will pervade every article admitted by us; and now, in taking farewell of our readers at the close of a literary year, though the curtain be dropped upon our labours, yet shall we be as busily employed as are those in a drama who are to re-appear in the next act; and though short be the interval until our next issuing, like theirs, we trust our coming again upon the stage will be welcomed, and we shall be recognized with approbation, though appearing under some change of dress.

MASTER CARPENTERS' SOCIETY.

NEW BUILDINGS' BILL.

A MEETING of the Master Carpenters' Society was held at the Freemasons' Tavern, on the 13th instant, for the election of officers for the ensuing year, the making a sheet list of prices for the year ending at Christmas, 1843, and various other matters connected with the trade. The attendance of the members was unusually numerous. Mr. H. Biers, the President, in the chair. The minutes of the last meeting being confirmed, and the average prices of timber and deals being taken, the president intimated that he had received a communication that "The Amended Buildings Bill" would not be pressed by government in the next session of Parliament, but that another bill was in preparation, and in all probability would be introduced next session. He (the president) thought that under these circumstances, it would be better to have a communication with the Woods and Forests previous to the re-appointing the committee on the new bill.

It was then moved and seconded that the president communicate with the Woods and Forests upon this subject, and that the result be laid before the society at the next January meeting.

Mr. Knight had much gratification in re-nominating their present excellent president to the office he had so ably filled. It was true that in their pressing again upon him the duties of the president, he was asking of him a favour beyond that of any preceding president, but it must be remembered the great services performed for this three years past, by their present chairman, in the various bills that had been before the Parliament and public in the shape of Buildings Regulation Bills, Drainage Bills, and bills of other description relating to the building interests. It had been announced by the president that if the present "amended bill" was not progressed with, at all events another, and perhaps a worse one, might be brought forward; and unless they had him again for their guide and director, unless they had his thorough knowledge to bring to bear upon these matters, the great good which he has already worked out would probably be lost to the society. He would therefore move that their present excellent president be again re-elected.

Mr. Stephens, in seconding the motion, observed that the society would bear in mind the masterly report upon the bill called the Building Regulations Bill of April last. That report, so ably drawn, and the objections therein so ably set forth, had proved, if proof had been wanting, the great talent of their president in meeting the objectionable clauses intended by that bill, for after the various interviews with the noble lord at the head of the Woods and Forests, and the Crown surveyors, very nearly the whole of the objections in that report had been expunged from the bill.

Mr. Lever (the treasurer) had never seen one who would more ably manage the very responsible duties that had devolved upon the chair since the first election of their present chairman. From January, 1841, to the present time, the bills for regulating buildings, drainage, and other matters connected therewith, had been constantly before the society, and the many objections thereto had been as unremittingly brought under its notice by their indefatigable president, and with an ability which none but those practically and largely engaged in building operations would adduce. Although in the period of five years our president had not been absent from his post three times, yet, feeling the interests of the society to be so deeply involved, he must press upon his acceptance the re-election to the chair.

Mr. Burstall had at much inconvenience attended this evening for the purpose of pressing the re-appointment of their president, at all events until the final passing of the intended bill.

Several other members having expressed themselves in similar terms.

Mr. H. Biers, the president, said that he had come down fully with the intention of declining the re-acceptance of the chair, which the kindness of some of the members had previously privately suggested to him; and although the society had so generously pressed the re-election, yet he did not see the propriety of again excluding some other member from occupying the honourable station of their president; nor did he see that if he gave his best attention to the bills intended to be brought forward, that his assistance as member might not be quite as efficient. It certainly was most gratifying to any individual to find that, in fulfilling the duties of the office, he had given the satisfaction that it appeared he had done, especially in the Buildings Bill. At the same time he must not take upon himself all the credit in this matter; he had been most ably assisted by a most excellent committee, and he felt much pleasure that the suggestions made from time to time had been most readily assented to by the whole of the society. To many of the members of both Houses of Parliament their best thanks were also due, and most especially to the Bishop of London, in the Lords (who presented their first petition), and to Colonel Wood (Middlesex), in the Commons, who is at all times accessible, and who has paid the greatest attention to the subject. The road is now comparatively clear to that when first they started upon the Buildings Regulation Bill of Lord Normanby's and Mr. Fox Maule's. At that period not half-a-dozen members in either House understood the subject-matter or the details of the bills then presented for their discussion. But the Society of Master Carpenters by petitions; by evidence in Committee in the House of Commons; by communications with the executive; by reports; by deputations; and other means; have called the attention of the legislature to the vast importance of a bill of this description,—a bill which will control and involve the domestic arrangements of nearly two millions of the inhabitants of the metropolis and its suburban districts. It is not saying too much to state that, had not this society stood forward almost singly in opposing, determinately opposing, the bill of last session (April), that that bill, with all its attendant evils, would ere this have become a law. A member of the House of Commons, upon an interview proposing an opposition to that proposed bill, observed "that it would be useless to oppose the bill, it being a government bill, and most of the members would take it for granted, that having the Woods and Forests, the Crown surveyors and others to draw the bill, that that bill must be right, and it would pass as a matter of course." The society not at all acquiescing in this arrangement bestirred themselves with still greater energy, drew the report, and, by the favour of Colonel Wood, obtained an interview with Lord Lincoln at the Woods and Forests. Lord Lincoln, as will be recollected by the deputation, received them most courteously, and having listened with great attention to the many objections to this intended bill, appointed the Crown surveyors to meet the deputation to discuss the several objections. The committee or deputation having met the Crown surveyors, the objection to the bill was gone through section by section; and the result was, that an amended bill (July, 1843) was presented, and which bill contains but very few of the clauses objected to by this society. Thus, by the exertions of this society, the metropolis has escaped a bill most absurd and impracticable in its details as to building regulations. It is but fair, however, to state that in a draft prepared by the Crown surveyors, there appeared but little difference between them and this society; but it appeared also, that there was a controlling power somewhere in the

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